

MR. NORRIS: My name is Weston Norris. I'm a resident of Paonia. As promised, the war on coal has been comprehensive and relentless. The lease moratorium is the latest attempt by the current administration to finish off an industry that brought -- brought the U.S. into the industrial era and continues to provide clean, low-cost electricity. The moratorium discussion is not about getting more money for the coal, but simply another vehicle to shut down mining on public lands. Groups such as Wildlife Guardians with their leave it in the ground campaign have found a sympathetic ear with the current administration and are engaged in a no-holds barred blitz on the mines. We hear that we need to transition to renewable. We simply need to look at Germany and their attempts to transition to renewable. It hasn't worked out. They're building more coal-powered plants as we speak. These groups want to promote tourism industry and end the so-called boom/bust cycle of the extractive industries. [Indiscernible] stance. But, what they're really promoting is a permanent bust cycle for the working families of the rural West. These groups use half-truths and outright lies to promote their agenda and scare the public. They make it sound like big coal usually pick up a coal lease for next to nothing and start mining immediately. This is -- there could be nothing further from the truth. What they fail to mention is there's a comprehensive processes mines must go through to acquire a mine on -- a Federal lease. The process is costly and time-consuming and involves multiple agencies and many years to complete. In recent years, the NGOs have found success delaying the entire process and have exploited every loophole they can find. To impose a lease moratorium on top of their delays is an insult to the hardworking men and women of the coal industry who actually produce wealth where there was nothing before. Rest assured that once the war on coal is won, they will move to oil, natural gas, and ranching. Developing nations around the world are increasing coal-fired power generation at an impressive rate. Is the U.S. going to give up its lowest cost source of power while the rest of the world moves past us? Those promoting the notion that there're social costs to carbon obviously haven't looked at life expectancy in developing countries. As carbon usage arises, the life expectancy goes up dramatically. There is no such thing as a social cost of carbon. There's, however, social benefit of

carbon. And everyone in this room owes their standard of living to it. [Indiscernible] renewables cannot supply the affordable energy and reliability needs of the modern industrial society. Coal will be extracted and used to generate power. The question is whether it will come from public land to the West or private holdings elsewhere? There's been alleged that the taxpayers are not getting their fair share of profits from Federal coal. This is disingenuous when, in fact, up to 40 cents of every dollar coal sale goes back to the government. As a general rule, bonus bids are paid for substantially more reserves than are actually recoverable. There's no discount or refund for the coal that isn't there. The Federal Government runs a massive deficit up to \$19 trillion. The agency should be looking for ways to market Federal resources, not shut them down. Thank you. MS.

PATTERSON: Thank you. MR. BLACK: Hi. I'm John Black, and I work for Bowie Resource Partners. And I've been in the coal industry for 33 years. And my question is why stop the leasing program in order to evaluate it? The existing program has been working for decades with changes coming at different intervals through this timeframe. Procedures have been updated and reflect new rulings and changes to policies. Currently it takes years to get through a review and approval process. The current lease track that I am aware of has been in the process for 10 years now. This would suggest that there is ample time to evaluate all of the concerns that are being brought up on a lease-by-lease basis. [Indiscernible] there's actually no proof that the system is broken, only assumptions of cost, allegations of contributing factors, and emotional and personal desires. I would advocate that the program continue as is during any evaluation period. The fact that you need to stop the system in order to review and look into the workings is suspicious and lends -- leads to another motive indeed. Our society has advanced, thrived, and succeeded quite soundly in improving our lives and wellbeing. All this can be attributed to advancements in knowledge, technology, and let us not forget hard work. Energy is the single most contributing fact of this process, and coal has been a major factor in the source from steam locomotives to efficient burning coal plants. Today coal is a major source of energy for all developing countries. To have advance in a growing civilization -- or should I say world, you must have abundant

and reliable energy. And to have a functioning economy, you have to actually produce something of value. I am a realist. I believe in a -- advancement and change is a part of the human journey. The time will come when a shift from the current energy sources will happen. This will happen by changing the way we use our current sources and adding resources as they become available. But, that shift should come in a natural progression as it has in the past. Forcing or trying to control this progression can only hinder that process; and I believe will have dire consequences. I am not here to save my job or industry. I just hope that we do and go forward as we proceed in a logical, civil, and honest manner for the good of all mankind. MS. PATTERSON: Thank you. MR. SPEHAR: Hello. I'm Jim Spehar. I'm from Grand Junction. Thank you all for giving us the opportunity to speak today. Six generations ago, my great-grandparents and grandparents came to Colorado from Eastern Europe to dig coal. Three generations of us did that. Another generation, my generation, my brother, helped build the last unit of the Craig at the coal-fired power plant. So, we have a little bit of coal in our DNA. As a Western Colorado County Commissioner and City Council Member and Mayor, I learned the importance of focusing on the long term. And I'll try and do that in my remarks today. Long term for coal doesn't look good, and it hasn't looked good for quite a while. The transition is already underway. The U.S. Energy Information Agency says coal has been declining since 1990 through four administrations. Exports, which helped prop up the industry, were down 23 percent last year, in the third straight year of decline from 2012 record levels. The major financial institutions -- Bank of America, City Group, Morgan-Stanley, J.P. Morgan Chase, they no longer finance coal projects. The transition is underway. Nationally and internationally, we're moving away from coal to other cleaner fossil fuels and renewables. We've lessened our per capita energy use because of conservation. Renewables don't have to be more expensive. Here in Colorado, we're at 17 percent renewable in our energy mix. We're headed to 30 percent. Our household energy costs are 23 percent below the national average. The time to do this review you've undertaken is now. It's easier to do it in an, in a slow time in a market driven down turn, rather than the chaos of a boom. And certainly once every 35 years is not too often. Given my background,

including a term as the President of the Colorado Municipal League, my focus is on communities. The impacts you are hearing about are very real. Commissioner Roebar from Delta County detailed them very well. I was at a meeting at Delta County last Friday where that possible consolidation of a couple of high schools was mentioned. And I guess the emotional way to put the question is what happens to a community when you kill the mascot? My recommendation should there be a royalty increase is that these new funds be earmarked to assist coal communities in the inevitable transition of their economies. Also to help in situations such as the one on the front page of today's local paper detailing the impact of Peabody's bankruptcy on Routt County schools. 1.3 million dollars is unpaid for the next school year, jeopardizing the education of that District's kids. Realistically acknowledging the long-term downward slide of coal over the last 26 years and providing funding for the inevitable economic and social transitions of coal communities should be one important focus of this review. So, thank you for the chance to comment. MS. PATTERSON: Thank you. We will call group 31 through 35 up to microphone 1, to Molly now. These next two groups should take us through right after 1:00. So, we will probably not call down the next group until after the lunch break.